



The Service Beacon

A monthly publication for FSIS field and headquarters employees.

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Inspection Service

January 1999
Volume 2, Number 8

bea-con (be ken) *noun*

A signaling or guiding device, such as a lighthouse, located on a coast. A source of guidance or inspiration.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Farewell

by Glen Durst

*Administrative Services Division
Telephone: 202-720-3551*

I recently announced that I will be retiring from FSIS on January 31, 1999. Over the many years that I have worked for the Department of Agriculture, I have met or talked with many of you who read *The Service Beacon*. I have certainly enjoyed working in FSIS and hopefully some of the innovative policies and procedures that we have implemented and communicated through the *Beacon* will be beneficial to FSIS. I am leaving the Administrative Services Division and *The Service Beacon* in good hands, and I'm sure that the level of service that you have come to expect will continue. Thanks for your support over the years.

New SES Assignments

by Ron Hicks

*Office of Management
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FSIS Administrator Tom Billy notified senior managers that he is re-establishing the position of associate administrator. Effective January 4, 1999, Margaret O'K. Glavin will serve in that position.

Glavin is currently Deputy Administrator (DA) for Policy, Program Development and Evaluation. In making the reassignment, Billy noted that he will need to be on travel in connection with Codex and other responsibilities over the next several months, and it is imperative that a clearly designated agency leader be at the helm as the agency deals with a number of key issues, including HACCP implementation, a revised recall policy, and continuation of regulatory reform. Billy also announced other reassignments effective January 4: Philip Derfler, currently Associate Deputy Administrator to Glavin, will move into the DA slot. Another member of the Senior Executive Service, Judith Riggins, will move into Derfler's vacated slot, from her current position as Director, Executive Management and Coordination Staff. The three staffs (Congressional and Public Affairs, Executive Management, Food Safety Education) will report to Glavin. A press release is being prepared.

In his remarks, Billy also noted that over the past year, the DA's have really worked hard as a team. Mr. Billy also expressed his great appreciation to Mark Mina, DA for Field Operations, for leading the effort for successful HACCP implementation; to Kaye Wachsmuth, DA for Public Health and Science, for her leadership in

infusing public health into FSIS risk management activities; and to me, DA for Management, for leadership in the administrative arena.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Performance Management System on HPDesk and Exchange

by Linda James

*Human Resources Division
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The FSIS Performance Management Workgroup recently recommended the implementation of automated, electronic systems to provide employees and supervisors with access to aspects of the performance management systems.

In response to the Workgroup recommendations, the Human Resources Division, Performance Evaluation and Recognition Branch has developed an electronic HPDesk Catalog in the HPDesk Library and a Public Folder on Exchange dedicated to performance management.

The HPDesk catalog and Exchange folder will be used to provide information and reminders to employees and supervisors about the Agency's performance appraisal system. In addition, the catalog and folder will also be used to publicize

several of the Workgroup's recommendations.

For those employees that do not have computer access to these resources, the information will also be published through other printed media (i.e., FSIS Notice, newsletters, etc.).

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

Distribution of FSIS Form 4791-27, Report of Alleged Safety or Health Hazard

by Tom Wright

Administrative Services Division

Telephone: 202-720-3845

Q: FSIS Form 4791-27, Report of Alleged Safety or Health Hazard has 6 copies. For Office of Field Operations inspection and compliance personnel, what is the distribution for this form?

A: The complainant (employee) completes items 1 through 6 and submits the form to the supervisor or official-in-charge while retaining copy 6.

The supervisor completes items 7 through 12 of the form and provides copy 2 to the complainant and retains copy 1. The supervisor submits copies 3 through 5 through the circuit supervisor and the district manager for their review of the actions taken to date and signature.

The district manager provides copies 3 through 5 to the workplace safety and health official (safety and occupational health specialist) assigned to the Office of Management Services Staff.

The safety and occupational health specialist reviews the actions taken to date, signs the form and retains copy 3. Copies 4 and 5 are returned through supervisory channels to the complainant and his/her supervisor respectively.

When the process is completed, the complainant should have copies 2, 4, and 6.

The immediate supervisor should have copies 1 and 5, and the workplace safety and health official should have copy 3.

Q: Why is it important to follow the distribution instructions?

A: By documenting when a hazard has been reported, investigated, and corrected, we are able to meet the requirements of providing safe and healthful work places. Erroneous corrective actions or lack of corrective actions are quickly surfaced.

Glove Questionnaire

by Betsy Kogan

Administrative Services Division

Telephone: 202-720-9968

On December 15, 1998, the Environmental, Health and Safety Branch (EHSB) mailed questionnaires addressed to red meat slaughter inspectors wearing cut-resistant gloves. Due to discrepancies in the mailing database, most targeted employees did not receive the questionnaire. We will re-mail the questionnaire to the 2,030 inspectors who are stationed at red meat slaughter establishments. If you have received and returned the questionnaire, there is no need to send in another one. If you are a red meat slaughter inspector using the cut-resistant glove should receive the questionnaire in January.

The glove questionnaire is designed to solicit feedback from these FSIS employees on the quality of the cut-resistant gloves and their supply system. We appreciate your feedback and will continue to improve the quality of this program.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at the telephone number listed above.

PROCUREMENT

Blanket Purchase Agreements

by Anita Voiselle

Administrative Services Division

Telephone: 202-720-0586

The Acquisitions and Agreements Sections has received numerous calls regarding the rejection of Blanket Purchase Agreement, Type 45, invoice receipt certification documents (Form AD-838D). The omission of Line Item Numbers (Block 8) and Budget Object Codes (Block 11) caused most of these rejections.

Because we changed our procedures this fiscal year in the processing of the originating document AD-838 (Purchase Order) it is very important that the instructions on the back of the form AD-838D be followed.

Specifically:

- Block 8: Indicates that when the originating document does not include line items, then the number 01 should be used for all line items.
- Block 11: Indicates that if no budget object code was entered on the establishing order it must be entered here.
- Block 13: Enter the accounting classification when different from the establishing order.

All type 45 orders processed through this office established a fund code (block 9) and an accounting classification code (block 13). This information is stored in NFC's system and should not have to be entered on the AD-838-D. The fund code always remains the same, but you may change the accounting classification. This will not be a permanent change unless the order is amended. Your copy of the AD-838 identifies what information was submitted to the National Finance Center.

TRAVEL

New Per Diem Rates

by Barbara McNiff

Budget and Fiscal Services Division

Telephone: 202-720-3061

The General Services Administration (GSA) has issued Amendment 75 to the Federal Travel Regulations, containing new per diem rates, which become effective January 1, 1999. A major change is that the maximum lodging amounts listed are exclusive of taxes. Employees will still be reimbursed for taxes associated with lodging costs, but they will be claimed as a Miscellaneous Expense, not as part of the lodging expenses. Additionally, there is no limit on the rate (e.g. 12%, 18%) of taxes that may be claimed.

Other changes made by GSA include:

- new per diem localities have been added and several others have been deleted;
- new seasonal rates have been established for some counties;
- a new M&IE rate - \$46 - has been added; and
- new geographical boundaries for temporary duty locations have been established. Some

previously combined locations are now listed separately, with different per diem rates.

An amendment to FSIS Directive 3800.1, Temporary Duty Travel Within CONUS, will be issued shortly. Because of the many changes in this Directive, employees should refer to it to ensure they have the correct per diem rates before beginning any temporary duty travel.

In addition to the Directive, you may find the Amendment on the FSIS web site:

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/budget.htm> and in the Exchange public folder titled "Travel Information."

VISA Travel Charge Card

by Sue Ayers

Budget and Fiscal Services Division

Telephone: 202-720-9851

The two major problems that Agency employees have experienced since receiving their new VISA charge cards for travel should now be resolved.

One problem involved some merchants who, because of their establishment's name, were categorized into certain "retail block" areas. Consequently, cardholders were "blocked" from making authorized travel charges, such as gasoline or deli-lunch purchases at "mom and pop" stores, most occurring in rural areas. After identifying the restrictive categories that covered those merchants, with the consent of the USDA Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), we requested NationsBank remove those blocks. (This all was a result of Department-wide retail blocks established in fiscal year 1997 by OCFO as a prevention of misuse and/or abuse of the Government travel charge card.)

The other problem involved cardholders whose accounts were put in a "V-3" inactive status. This developed when NationsBank initially issued VISA cards to all American Express (AmEx) cardholders whose accounts were "in-good-standing." Thereafter, they "turned off" charge cards for employees that were not on our master roster that had been reviewed by the Agency in September. In order to resolve this problem, NationsBank has been asked to turn all those V-3 status cards back on and we will advise them later which cards should be permanently turned off after a review is completed.

SUPPLIES

Requesting 6" X 12" Plastic Bags

by Sheree Johns

Midwestern Laboratory

Telephone: 314-263-2680

All three labs include in each shipping box an appropriate number of 6" X 12" plastic bags to sample requested tissues for an analysis. The accompanying sampling request form should be enclosed in a separate plastic bag in the same shipping box.

Each month the Midwestern Lab receives a few requests for a case/box of 6" X 12" plastic bags. Each case/box contains 1,500 bags. All requests for large amounts need to be accompanied by a justification.

Please be aware that Landover also supplies the field with 6" X 12" plastic bags, available in packs of "100". The established procedure for ordering from Landover should be followed (Item # FSIS-14).

Inspection Equipment Items - Special Pricing Available

by Pete Bridgeman

Administrative Services Division

Telephone: 301-504-4222

We have had extensive discussions with the National Joint Council (NJC) about the costs of some of the Inspection Equipment Items that you currently purchase on your own, and claim for reimbursement, per FSIS Directive 3410.3, Revision 3. We've done some research and have a national vendor, Hantover, Inc., who has developed special pricing available to USDA Inspection personnel for purchasing inspection equipment items. *This is being offered strictly as an alternative to any other source or preference you may have for purchasing these items.* If you have a local vendor that you prefer to use, as long as you follow the procedures in FSIS Directive 3410.3, Rev. 3, you are free to continue using them. If you use this vendor, you will still pay for these items and claim for reimbursement per the procedures outlined in the directive.

Attachment 1 contains a listing of personal inspection equipment items, showing the current market "list" price in the 1st column, the standard discounted price when purchased from most national suppliers in the second column, and the "special" price available from Hantover, Inc., for USDA use only. The manufacturer's name for each listed item is in italics. If you have a particular style and manufacturer that you prefer that is not on this list, you may contact Hantover, ask for Gary Lowe, and indicate your preference, and they will attempt to get that style for you at a discounted price. They do also carry a number of appropriate footwear items that are available at a discount price but are not listed here. Brands and prices are available from the vendor.

Hantover will honor the special price providing the person ordering identifies themselves as a USDA inspector (or that they're purchasing the items for USDA inspectors), and/or gives the USDA account number, which is 818379. There will also be shipping costs, approximately \$5.00 to \$10.00 per order, depending on the size of the order. Inspectors can use a personal credit card, or they can purchase these items with a personal check. If using a check, the vendor will send out the ordered items upon receipt of the check.

The number to call to place an order is 1-800-821-2227. Remember to give the account number (818379) and identify yourself as a USDA inspector.

Unit of Issue Changes

We've noted a number of discrepancies in the April 1998 edition of the "FSIS Field Supply System at the Landover Service Center" catalog, primarily under Unit of Issue in the Forms section. Please review the list below and make pen and ink changes to your catalog, accordingly:

Form Number	Unit Issue Shown	Actual Unit of Issue
FSIS 2450-5	EA	PKG100
FSIS 2630-12	HD	EA
FSIS-4430-5	PKG100	EA
FSIS-4430-6	PKG100	EA
FSIS 4732-1	PKG200	PKG100
FSIS 5610-1	PKG25	EA
FSIS 7310-3	PKG50	EA
FSIS 8000-12	ROLL	PKG50
FSIS 8140-2	EA	BK
FSIS 8810-1.1	PD100	PKG25
FSIS 8810-1.2	PD100	PKG25
FSIS 8810-1.3	PD 100	PKG25
FSIS 9060-7	PKG100	EA
FSIS 9060-10	PKG50	EA
FSIS 9220-4	PKG50	EA
FSIS 9220-7	PKG50	EA
FSIS 9770-3	EA	PAD100
FSIS 10,210-1	PD50	EA

FSIS 10,300-1	EA	PKG25
MP-455	PKG25	EA
MP-490	PKG250	EA
AD-112	PKG25	PKG50
AD-202	PKG25	PKG50
AD-616	PAD50	PKG50
AD-617	PAD50	PKG50
CA-16	EA	PKG100
CA-20A	PKG100	PKG50
CA-35B	PAD100	PKG25

Still Mixing Orders

It really does slow the processing of an order down when you mix Supply Items (orange section of the catalog) on the same order with Forms and Specialty Items (Green Section of catalog), and it slows the whole process down, which affects everyone else's orders, not just your own. We have emphasized this repeatedly in the catalog and in a number of *Beacon* articles over the past 2 years. Many of you have paid attention and are separating your orders appropriately, and we really appreciate that. However, some of you have not. Attachment 2 to this edition of the *Beacon* contains a list of Customers we received "mixed" orders from during the first week of December. If you see your customer account number or Establishment Number on this list, know that you are still part of the problem. To become a part of the solution and get your account number off of this list, all you have to do is **stop mixing those orders**. Everyone will appreciate it, because everyone will get their orders filled quicker. Our intention here is only to let you know who you are. If you have any questions about the proper way to complete your order, call us on the toll-free number, 1-800-714-8335. We're glad to help you out.

Congratulations, Yvette!

Yvette Bamiro, who played an instrumental role in getting the FSIS Field Supply System up and running and has been a key contributor to the success of the Personal Property, Motor Vehicle and Supply Section (PPMVSS) for the past 2 years, recently received a well-deserved promotion to join the ASD Facilities and Space Management Section. We all extend our congratulations and appreciation for all of your hard work and effort while you were with PPMVSS. Good luck in your new position!

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**Technical Service Center Moves**

by Jo Patterson

*Administrative Services Division
Telephone: 202-720-3033*

The FSIS Technical Service Center (TSC) has moved to its permanent location in the Landmark Building in downtown Omaha, Nebraska. Effective December 29, 1998, their new address is:

USDA, FSIS
Technical Service Center
Suite 300 Landmark Center
1299 Farnam Street
Omaha NE 68102

The phone numbers will remain the same.

Tel: 402-221-7400

Fax: 402-221-7438

HPDesk Address: "Tech Center" or "HACCP Hotline"

Internet Address:
Tech.Center@usda.gov or
HACCP.Hotline@usda.gov

ISSUANCES**Recent Agency Issuances**

by Mary Wissman

*Administrative Services Division
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The following notice and directives have been issued since the December 1998 edition of *The Service Beacon*. Many recent issuances are available in an electronic format from the "PCDIALS" library in Opendedsk and from the "Agency Issuances" public folder in the Exchange mail system (Outlook).

Notice 51-98 (12/21/98)
Half Day Closing on December 24, 1998

Directive 3410.3 (12/11/98)
Reimbursement Provisions for
Inspection Expenditures Revision 4

Directive 6420.1 (12/17/98)
Livestock Post-Mortem Inspection
Activities-Enforcing the Zero
Tolerances for Fecal Material,
Ingesta, and Milk

Directive 10,240.2 (12/18/98)
Microbial Sampling of Ready-to-Eat
Products Produced by
Establishments Operating Under a
HACCP System: Amendment 1

Directives and notices are distributed automatically to applicable Agency employees and offices. Additional copies are available from the Printing and Distribution Section of the Paperwork Management Branch, Room 0157-S, Telephone: 202-720-4661.

INTERNAL CONTROLS**Internal Control Staff on the Web**

by Michael Thaggard

*Internal Control Staff
Telephone: 202-720-5959*

The Internal Control Staff (ICS) has joined several other OM activities with web pages on the FSIS Web Site. You can access this information from the Office of Management's web page at:

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/om/adserv.htm>

ICS has made available to the public and FSIS employees information on the Staff's mission and activities, including:

- Background, Vision, Mission & Function Statements
- Investigations
- OIG Hotline/Whistleblower Complaints
- Management Control Program
- Program Assessments
- External Audit Management
- Allegations of Reprisal
- Reporting Assault, Threats, Intimidation, or Interference

There are also links to other government web sites, such as the USDA Office of Inspector General and the Office of Management and Budget.

To comment on this newsletter or to submit an article for publication, please contact:

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The current and past editions of *The Service Beacon* are available electronically on the FSIS OpenDesk and Exchange mail systems as well as on the FSIS Website at: www.fsis.usda.gov/om/beacon.htm

ATTACHMENT 1

Special USDA Pricing from Hantover, Inc
Telephone: 1-800-821-2227
USDA Account Number: 818379

VENDOR ITEM NO./DESCRIPTION/Mfg	AVG LIST PRICE	DISCOUNT PRICE	SPECIAL USDA PRICE
45211 Boning Knife, 5", Curved Stiff <i>Russell</i>	13.50	11.59	7.72
45490 Boning Knife, 5", Curved Semi-Stiff <i>Forschner</i> , Fibrox Handle	14.80	11.85	7.82
45480 Boning Knife, 5", Narrow Stiff <i>Forschner</i> , Fibrox Handle	15.30	12.25	8.06
45492 Boning Knife, 5", Flexible Curved <i>Forschner</i> , Fibrox Handle	14.80	11.85	7.82
45810 Boning Knife, 6", Narrow Curved <i>Russell</i>	14.30	11.45	7.62
45847 Beef Skinner, 6", <i>Russell</i>	17.60	14.05	9.38
45485 Beef Skinner, 5", <i>Forschner</i> Curved Fibrox Handle	20.70	16.60	10.92
45486 Beef Skinner, 6", <i>Forschner</i> Curved Fibrox Handle	21.65	17.35	11.42
45845 Lamb Skinner, 5 1/4", <i>Russell</i>	15.70	13.45	8.98
45508 Lamb Skinner, 5", <i>Forschner</i>	19.70	15.75	10.39
24374 Inspection Node Hook, 5 1/2" Hook w/orange plastic handle	7.90	6.30	4.97
47140 Scabbard	8.15	6.50	5.00
46414 Steel - 10" x 1/2", Butcher Smooth	19.65	15.70	10.48
47134 Chain Belt, 48" w/ S Hook	8.70	6.95	4.87

ATTACHMENT 2

**Mixed Orders Received during December at the
Landover Service Center**

Customer Acct. No.	Establishment Number	Location
37007919	1494	MITCHELL, SD
37008788	6056	STANWOOD, WA
37013871	P7145	CORPUS CHRISTI, TX
37005339	P7632	FRESNO, CA
37032336	EGG 1141	FARINA, IL
37017884	P5516	SIDNEY, OH
37022241	P810	MOOREFIELD, WV
37022411	P758	CARTHAGE, MS
37041246	18859	NEW ROCKFORD, ND
37005738	2875	MODESTO, CA
37016314	421	PLAINWELL, MI
37026298	P4377	CARLSTADT, NJ
37010570	86M	SCHUYLER, NE
37036005	34	SALEM, VA
37009172	P486	SILOAM SPRINGS, AR
37042820	11155	JACKSONVILLE, FL
37007153	751A	SALINA, UT
37011835	P2088	HENDERSON, TX
37014524	1673	CHICAGO, IL
37017311	10053	EAST LANSING, MI
37005304	P930	FULTON, CA
37033855	17789	MORTON, IL
37013544	696	SAN BENITO, TX
37018325	P10176	SARANAC, MI
37028410	4010	FREELAND, PA
37020591	P1284	CANTON, GA
37020931	6543	SAVANNAH, GA
37015971	205	FORT BRANCH, IN